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formulae for treatment can be given, no dogmatic statements made in regard to general constructive measures."

Such a discussion as is presented in this book, points to a much more satisfactory solution of the problem of abnormal conduct than we have usually supposed possible. In line with other publications from the psychopathic institute, this book emphasizes the fact that there are definite, if with difficulty ascertainable, reasons for the conduct of an individual. In other words, behavior is not something determined by an individual *willing* to do wrong, or *willing* to do right, but behavior is determined by the kind of organism with which an individual starts out in life, and by the experience which he has had.

Municipal Court of Philadelphia.

DAVID MITCHELL.

PSYCHIATRIC FAMILY STUDIES. By *A. Myerson, M. D.* American Journal of Insanity, Vol LXXIII, No. 3, January, 1917.

This paper presents (1) a review of the literature on the treatment of the psychoses and the family studies done by other workers; (2) rearrangement and criticism of Koller and Dien's work on the heredity of the insane and non-insane; (3) marriage rate of the four groups of insane as shown by the Tauton (Mass.) State Hospital statistics; (4) "anticipating and antedating" as shown by the work of Mott and others and by Taunton figures; (5) the analysis of individual families from the records of the Taunton State Hospital. The author has three objections to the Mendelian laws as at present applied to psychopathic heredity: (1) "It is assumed that the neuropathic differs from the normal by the lack of some normal determiner. There is evidence adduced for this point of view and it is just as possible that a diseased determiner or even a new one is at work." (2) "The laws of Mendel have not been shown to apply for any single normal human character of simple type, except perhaps, eye color. To assume then that the vast range of the psychoses (the feeble-minded, the epileptic, character anomaly, criminality, and neuroses) is related to a unit determiner, or group of determiners acting as a unit is, to say the least, premature." (3) "There is a question in my mind whether a true Mendelism has been followed. The dominant characters of Mendel appear in a first generation through the mixing of two stocks, and in the second and later generations the proportion of recessive and dominant appears through the inbreeding of the first generation; that is to say, what would correspond to the mating of brothers and sisters in human relationships. No such conditions prevail in mankind and expectation of ratios and proportions seems to be futile."

In regard to the marriage rate of the insane, Myerson finds (1) "the males in the alcoholic, paretic and dementia praecox groups marry less than do the females. In the seniles, though the percentage of married men is greater, the totals of those who have entered conjugal relations at one time or another are about equal."

In regard to the statistics of the cases treated at the Taunton State Hospital, Myerson says the following: "There had been at the time that this part of the work was completed, in January, 1916, 22,300 admissions to Taunton State Hospital since its founding in 1854. From a rough calculation made by analyzing 3,000 cases taken at various points in the history of the hospital it seems that about 16,000 persons are represented in the 22,300 commitments. Of the 13,000 people in the hospital at that time, roughly ten per cent were related to one another. Of the patients that had been in the hospital from 1854 to 1916 there were 1,547 who were related to one another, and these represented 663 families."

"The mother-son relationship is much less frequent than the mother-daughter (as 55 is to 80), but the father-son relationship is only slightly less common than the father-daughter (as 55 to 59), and represents a difference more likely to be accidental."

In part five are discussed at length ninety-eight family groups. The author sets himself the following problem: "Given a certain type of mental disease in an ancestor, what form of mental disease is to be expected in his direct insane descendant?"

Answering this question, the result of this family study is as follows: From a paranoid psychosis in the immediate ancestor, dementia praecox or a paranoid condition results. Dementia praecox in the ancestor produces dementia praecox in the descendant. Cases of maniac depressive insanity show either the same psychosis or dementia praecox.

The study is made on material collected at the Taunton State Hospital, first by Dr. Charles C. McGaffin, former pathologist, and then by the author, Dr. A. Myerson, present chemical director and pathologist. All the records of the hospital were analyzed and supplemented by information obtained by field workers in regard to patients and their families after discharge.

This is a very interesting and suggestive study and a very good example of what may be done with state hospital records which so often are not available for any scientific purpose. The author is wisely conservative in his deductions, since, as he points out, institutional records are unsatisfactory as material on the basis of which one may answer some of the urgent problems confronting the psychiatrist, such as the question of the relation of genius to insanity, the problem of the psychoneuroses, criminalism and similar problems. Of course, it is obvious that in order to obtain any satisfactory conclusion in regard to such questions a great deal more information must be obtained regarding the uncommitted members of these families than it is possible to obtain from these records. This study, however, should encourage the hospital official not only in continuing to keep careful and detailed records, but in enlarging their scope and above all in following a good system of cross reference, such as that instituted at the Danvers State Hospital in Massachusetts, by the former superintendent, Charles Whitney Page. This work is a pointed answer

to the question so frequently asked by the lay officials as to the value of psychiatric records in state hospitals.

Chicago.

HERMAN M. ADLER.

FEEBLE-MINDEDNESS AS SEEN IN COURT. By *V. V. Anderson*, M. D. Mental Hygiene, April, 1917. Pp. 260-65.

The feeble-minded formed a nucleus of the recidivists. Examination shows that 25-40% of the group are feeble-minded. Of a group of 1,000 troublesome offenders, Anderson found 36% feeble-minded. This was a selected group, hence the proportion is quite high. Not more than 10% of all criminals are feeble-minded, yet this 10% is the very backbone of recidivism. An intensive study of a group of 100 feeble-minded individuals taken without selection from court files gives the following data: All showed sufficient deviation in childhood to have made their detection possible; 73% did not get beyond the fifth grade in school; 75% were not self-supporting after leaving school. They were equally incapable of conforming to the standards of conduct of their communities, as shown by the fact that the average number of arrests apiece was 18.25. Both probation and penal treatment were tried by the court. The group was placed on probation 432 times, 220 times surrendered, and 118 inside probations. They were given 735 penal sentences, of 106 years total, and 250 indeterminate sentences. An adequate explanation of all this maladjustment is found in the fact that 75% were below the mental level of ten-year-old children. There has been untold economic waste in not recognizing in early childhood the feeble-mindedness of these individuals, who should have been protected from their own weakness and who would have been made happy and useful in a limited environment created for their special needs. The community has acted unintelligently in failing to interpret correctly the condition of these weaker members.

Evanston, Ill.

ELIZABETH PETTY SHAW.